

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application as amended is respectfully requested. Claims 1-23 have been amended. Support for the amendments to claims 1-23 can be found in at least Figures 1-2 of the application as originally filed. Claims 1-23 are currently pending.

Claims 2, 16, and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. The Office Action indicates that the phrase "such as" renders claims 2, 16, and 22 indefinite because it is unclear whether the limitations following the phrase are part of the claimed invention. Applicant has amended claims 2, 16, and 22 to remove the phrase "such as earphones." Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2, 16, and 22 meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph and requests that the 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph rejections of claims 2, 16, and 22 be withdrawn.

Claim 21 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,546,458 to Iwami ("Iwami"). Independent claim 21 as amended is directed to a "method of conference calls in a portable communication device having separate inputs to at least first and second speech encoder paths integrated in said portable communication device and operatively connected to a summator integrated in said portable communication device, wherein first and second electronic signals are received from recording devices operatively connected to said separate inputs of said portable communication device." Independent claim 21 as amended includes the steps of "receiving in said portable communication device via said inputs said first and second electronic signals simultaneously even if the signals are different" and "generating by said summator a sum signal of said first and second electronic signals for transmission to a transmitter/receiver of said portable communication device." Applicant respectfully submits that Iwami fails to teach or suggest at least one of the distinguishing features of independent claim 21.

Iwami describes a handsfree adapter that receives a signal from a plurality of microphones in an amplifier section. Iwami further describes that the amplifier section includes an amplifier circuit consisting of two operational amplifiers, and a differential amplifier circuit consisting of an operational amplifier. Iwami further describes a control section for regulating volume level. Iwami still further describes that through differential amplification,

simultaneously input noise components are canceled out and reduced, and at the same time speech components are extracted. Applicant respectfully submits that Iwami performs noise cancellation and speech extraction using an analog signal, and fails to teach or suggest the use of speech encoding, much less first and second speech encoder paths integrated in a portable communication device as found in independent claim 21. Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 21 distinguishes over Iwami and requests that the 35 U.S.C. 102(b) rejection of independent claim 21 be withdrawn.

Claims 1-6, 10-13, 15-18, and 22-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,321,080 to Diethorn ("Diethorn") in view of Iwami. Independent claim 1 has been amended to include "wherein said at least first and second speech encoder paths are integrated in said portable communication device and said portable communication device is adapted to receive said first and second electronic signals simultaneously even if the signals are different" and "wherein said portable communication device comprises a summator integrated in said portable communication device adapted to sum said first and second electronic signals into a sum signal for transmission to said transmitter/receiver."

Diethorn describes a conference telephone including a base having a base-mounted microphone, a handset having a handset mounted speaker and a handset-mounted microphone. Diethorn further describes a control circuit that responds to the selection of a conference-call mode to generate a control signal which is used to activate either the base-mounted speaker or the base-mounted microphone, activate the handset-mounted microphone if the base-mounted speaker was activated and to activate the handset-mounted speaker if the base-mounted microphone was activated, and disable any microphone other than the activated microphone.

Applicant respectfully submits that Diethorn appears to describe processing of audio signals in an analog domain and fails to teach or suggest the use of speech encoding, much less first and second speech encoder paths integrated in a portable communication device as found in independent claim 1. As discussed with respect to independent claim 21, Iwami also fails to teach or suggest at least this feature. Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 distinguishes over Diethorn in view of Iwami and requests that the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection of independent claim 1 be withdrawn.

Independent claim 15 as amended is directed to a CODEC block for use as an integrated part of a portable communication device for conference calls including the features of "first and second speech encoder paths, with first and second inputs for connection to first and second recording devices, respectively." For similar reasons as those discussed with respect to independent claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 15 distinguishes over Diethorn in view of Iwami and requests that the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection of independent claim 15 be withdrawn.

Claims 2-6, 10-13, 16-18, and 22-23 are dependent upon and include the features of their respective independent claims 1, 15, and 21. As discussed with respect to independent claims 1 and 15, Diethorn in view of Iwami fails to teach or suggest at least one of the distinguishing features of independent claim 1. For at least the reasons as discussed with respect to independent claims 1 and 15, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2-6, 10-13, and 16-18 distinguish over Diethorn in view of Iwami. As discussed with respect to independent claim 21, Iwami fails to teach or suggest at least one of the distinguishing features of independent claim 21. For similar reasons as those discussed with respect to independent claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that Diethorn also fails to teach or suggest these distinguishing features. Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claims 22-23 also distinguish over Diethorn in view of Iwami. Applicant respectfully requests that the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejections of claims 2-6, 10-13, 16-18, and 22-23 be withdrawn.

Claim 14 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Diethorn in view of Iwami as applied to claim 1, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,078,809 to Proctor ("Proctor"). Claim 14 is dependent upon and includes the features of independent claim 1. As discussed with respect to independent claim 1, Diethorn in view of Iwami fails to teach or suggest at least one of the distinguishing features of independent claim 1.

Proctor describes a method and apparatus for performing a multi-party communication in a communication system. Proctor further describes a communication system having a first base unit in communication with a first mobile unit, and a second base unit in communication with a second mobile unit. Proctor further describes that the first base unit and the second base unit each include a decoder and an encoder. As described by Proctor, each of the encoders is in a separate device. Applicant respectfully submits that Proctor fails to teach or

suggest the distinguishing features of at least first and second encoder paths that are integrated in a portable communication device. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 14 distinguishes over Diethorn in view of Iwami and further in view of Proctor and requests that the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection of claim 14 be withdrawn.

Claims 7-9 and 19-20 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but are indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter with respect to claims 7-9 and 19-20.

In view of the above amendment, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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